

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently Amended) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, in a bidding system with which trading partners present their bidding prices via a network, in response to a matter presented by a buyer company, comprising:

a trading partner database for storing ~~data~~ scores representing capabilities of the trading partners, ~~in numerical form; and~~ on a plurality of estimation items;

an element weight table containing weights of the capabilities of the trading partners for the plurality of estimation items for each of plural matters;

a database for said matters to be quoted by trading partners; and

a controller arranged

to read the ~~data~~ determine bidding trading partners that show bidding prices;

to retrieve scores on the plurality of estimation items of the bidding trading partners ~~represented in numerical form, from the trading partner database, on receiving the bidding prices and;~~

to retrieve weights for the plurality of estimation items for the matter presented by the buyer company, from the element weight table;

to multiply a score on each of the estimation items by a weight for the estimation item for the matter presented by the buyer to calculate a weighted score on each of the estimation items for the matter for each of the bidding trading partners;

to sum weighted scores of the estimation items to calculate a weighted overall score for the matter for each of the bidding trading partners; and

to select a trading partner ~~or~~ to supply the matter from the bidding trading partners for the matter, based on the bidding prices and the data ~~represented in numerical form~~ weighted overall scores.

2. (Currently Amended) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 1, wherein the data scores representing capabilities of the trading partners, ~~in numerical form,~~ stored in the trading partner database are data scores representing capabilities of the trading partners on a plurality of estimation items, in numerical form, based on any of information on the trading partners, obtained from the trading partners, information concerning estimation of the trading partners, kept by the buyer company and business information concerning the trading partners, obtained from external credit-ranking agencies.

3. Cancel

4. Cancel

5. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 3, wherein the controller is further arranged to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical

form, to multiply the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

6. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 1, wherein the controller is further arranged to choose a selecting routine from a plurality of predetermined selecting routines, according to an article subjected to the bidding and to select a trading partner or trading partners for the matter by executing the chosen selecting routine.

7. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having the highest value of the weighted data represented in numerical form.

8. (Original) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to add the price difference represented in numerical form to the weighted data represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the addition.

9. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to represent a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form, to multiply the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form and to select trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

10. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having presented the lowest bidding price among the trading partners having a score of the weighted data represented in numerical form, higher than a predetermined one.

11. (Withdrawn) A system for determining overall capability of a trading partner, according to claim 6, wherein the plurality of predetermined selecting routines include a selecting routine which functions to select the trading partner having the highest value of the weighted data represented in numerical form provided that no trading partner has presented a bidding price equal to or greater than the target price.

12. (Currently Amended) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner by a system comprising a database storing data scores representing capabilities of trading partners, ~~in numerical form~~ an element weight table containing weights of the

capabilities of the trading partners for a plurality of estimation items for each of plural matters and a database for said matters to be quoted by trading partners, and a controller, the method comprising the following steps performed by the controller:

receiving bidding prices from the trading partners;

determining bidding trading partners that show bidding prices;

reading data retrieving scores on the plurality of estimation items of the bidding trading partners, in numerical form, from the trading partner database;

retrieving weights for the plurality of estimation items for the matter presented by the buyer company, from the element weight table;

multiplying a score on each of the estimation items by a weight for the estimation item for the matter presented by the buyer to calculate a weighted score on each of the estimation items for the matter for each of the bidding trading partners;

summing weighted scores of the estimation items to calculate a weighted overall score for the matter for each of the bidding trading partners; and

selecting a trading partner or to supply the matter from the bidding trading partners for the matter based on the received bidding prices and the read data represented in numerical form weighted overall scores.

13. (Currently Amended) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, wherein the data scores representing capabilities of the trading partners, in numerical form, stored in the trading partner database are data scores representing capabilities of the trading partners on a plurality of estimation items, in numerical form, based on any of information on the trading partners, obtained from the

trading partners, information concerning estimation of the trading partners, kept by the buyer company and business information concerning the trading partners, obtained from external credit-ranking agencies.

14. Cancel

15. Cancel

16. (Withdrawn) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 14, further comprising the following-steps performed by the controller: representing a difference between the bidding price and a target price predetermined for the matter, in numerical form; multiplying the weighted data represented in numerical form by the price difference represented in numerical form; and selecting trading partners in order of decreasing value of the data represented in numerical form, after the multiplication.

17. (Withdrawn) A method for comprehensively determining a trading partner, according to claim 12, further comprising the following steps performed by the controller: choosing a selecting routine from a plurality of predetermined selecting routines; and selecting a trading partner or trading partners for the matter by executing the chosen selecting routine.